

MINUTES – Work Health and Safety Committee Meeting

Friday, 17 August 2018
Parliament House, Room 1S4

Present:

Nathan Winn	Liberal Party of Australia
Josh Manuatu	Liberal Party of Australia
Helen Lewis	Liberal Party of Australia
Melanie Beaumont	Liberal Party of Australia
Rosemary Little *	Liberal Party of Australia
Luke Barnes	Liberal Party of Australia
Emma Harding	Australian Labor Party
Josh Zwar	Office of the Special Minister of State
Daniel Wong	Office of the Special Minister of State
Amy Knox	Community and Public Sector Union
Poni Ravula	Australian Services Union
Eva Sarah	Jardine Lloyd Thompson (JLT)
Bek Bjarnadottir	Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (M&PS), Department of Finance
Tony Nairn	Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (M&PS), Department of Finance

* via teleconference

Apologies: Simon Kelly – The Nationals

Meeting Opened: 10:05 am
Meeting Chair: Bek Bjarnadottir
Meeting Closed: 10.40 am

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

- Ms Bjarnadottir welcomed the members of the committee and noted apologies.

Agenda Item 2 – Actions arising from the previous meeting

- M&PS to communicate with WHS Site Officers regarding arrangements at APH.
 - In progress.
- Finance to facilitate Staff Assistance Officer (SAO) training for remaining HSRs and Deputies who have not yet completed training.
 - Completed.
- Finance and JLT to arrange 12-monthly refresher training for WHS site officers.
 - In progress.
- Finance to provide committee members with a soft copy of the revised Workplace Bullying and Harassment – Policy and Procedure for MOP(S) Act employees and Parliamentarians (the policy).
 - Completed.
- Finance to arrange a teleconference to discuss the revisions to the policy.
 - Completed.
- Ms Harding to provide MOPS WHS with specific details regarding security incidents.
 - Completed.

Agenda Item 3 – Quarterly WHS Report

- Ms Bjarnadottir thanked JLT for their work on the quarterly WHS report, and outlined that some of the incidents and hazards have been carried over from the previous report as the reporting period has been changed to calendar quarters.
- Mr Manuatu raised concerns regarding the notifiable incidents reported as they seemed to be minor incidents. Ms Bjarnadottir explained that there are certain incidents which require notification to Comcare and a large number of the incidents were related to water leaks. MOP(S) is working with Comcare to clarify the requirements for reporting.
- Mr Manuatu said it would be good to see when an incident results in a lost time injury. Ms Bjarnadottir advised that none of the notifiable incidents in the 2017/18 financial year were categorised as a serious injury.
- Ms Sarah advised there are three categories of incidents that require reporting to Comcare and stated JLT could add the category of the notifiable incidents in the report for clarification.

Agenda Item 4 – Staff Assistance Officer Training

- Ms Bjarnadottir advised that the SAO training module is now available via Skytrust under the Workplace Bullying and Harassment Training package. She encouraged everyone to complete the training and provide any feedback, comparing it to the previous SAO training.
- Ms Bjarnadottir advised HSRs and Deputies that once their training is complete, they need to forward their certificates to MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au to enable payment of Corporate Responsibility Allowance. Further communication would be sent out about this.
- Ms Bjarnadottir advised that the SAO role is currently limited to those elected as HSRs and Deputies, however the training is available to all staff to complete. HSRs are able to nominate alternative staff members to be a SAO for that workgroup in their place.
- Ms Knox asked if the Workplace Bullying and Harassment training is compulsory for SAOs - Ms Bjarnadottir confirmed this.

Agenda Item 5 – Other Business

- There was general discussion regarding difficulty accessing Skytrust to complete online ergonomic assessments and/or WHS training. Ms Bjarnadottir suggested that the login user guide and links to Skytrust could be included on the pages that relate to the use of Skytrust.
- Mr Manuatu asked if Finance refers employees back to their political party when they are contacted about a bullying and harassment claim. Ms Bjarnadottir confirmed this is not a step in the process outlined in the policy.
- Mr Manuatu asked if claims of bullying and/or harassment are included in the WHS report. Ms Bjarnadottir advised this would depend if the employee lodged it as a workplace incident in Skytrust or provided enough detail for Finance to lodge it.
- There was general discussion regarding the need for the Employee Assistance Program to be better advertised, specifically with regard to the availability of mediation services. Ms Bjarnadottir advised that with the recent launch of JLT Assure as the new EAP provider, more communication to staff is scheduled and Finance can ensure there is a focus on the availability of mediation services.
- Mr Barnes queried what checks are in place to recognise trends developing in offices regarding bullying and harassment. Ms Bjarnadottir explained that both the MOP(S) WHS team and the M&PS Staff Help Desk would notice patterns from calls or emails or workplace incidents lodged in Skytrust and discuss the issue/s with the relevant Director/s.
- Mr Ravula noted that employees also have the ability to contact a union if they are experiencing bullying and/or harassment.
- Ms Harding asked if next year it would be possible to set the meetings 12 months in advance. Ms Bjarnadottir said this is something that can be looked at when the sitting calendar is released.

Agenda Item 6 – Next Meeting

- The Committee agreed that the next meeting will be held at Parliament House at 10:00am AEST on Friday 30 November, 2018.

Action Items

Finance/JLT to communicate with WHS Site Officers regarding new arrangements at APH and arrange 12 monthly refresher training for WHS Site Officers.

JLT to include category of notifiable incidents in the quarterly WHS report.

Finance to provide further communication regarding SAO program and associated CRA.

Finance to include the Skytrust login user guide and links to Skytrust on the pages that relate to the use of Skytrust.

JLT/Finance - communication will be sent to all staff soon and Finance can ensure there is a focus on the availability of mediation services.
